

**TOP SECRET/SENSITIVE**  
**EXCLUSIVELY EYES ONLY**

December 9, 1970

**MEMORANDUM FOR**

**THE SECRETARY OF DEFENSE**

**SUBJECT:**

**Attached Message from The President  
to General Abrams**

**The President has asked that the following personal message  
be sent to General Abrams on an eyes only basis via the  
most secure means.**

**Henry A. Kissinger**

**Enclosure**

OSD Review Completed

ON-FILE NSC RELEASE  
INSTRUCTIONS APPLY

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December 9, 1970

**TO: General Abrams, COMUSMACV**  
**FROM: The President**

I have been following the military situation in Cambodia closely and am concerned that the situation over the coming dry season could deteriorate seriously and permit enemy forces to re-establish themselves in formerly occupied areas adjacent to Cambodia's border with South Vietnam. Such a situation could develop through an enemy strategy designed to neutralize or topple Cambodian resistance, through the physical reoccupation of former enemy sanctuary areas, or through a combination of both strategies.

The enemy's freedom of action will obviously be enhanced to the extent that allied forces permit the enemy to hold the initiative in the weeks ahead. I believe that Cambodian determination, the improved state of VNAF combat effectiveness, and remaining U. S. combat capabilities represent sufficient assets to permit the adoption of bold and aggressive allied counter-actions which could seriously disrupt the enemy's dry season strategy.

For this reason, I expect you to undertake, in coordination with the armed forces of South Vietnam and Cambodia, an intensive planning

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effort that, within the political limitations imposed on U.S. forces, is designed to carry the battle to the enemy to the greatest extent possible.

Therefore, I have asked Dr. Kissinger's Deputy, General Haig, to visit Phnom Penh and Saigon, arriving in theater on Sunday, December 13, to further underline the importance I place on this effort and to amplify for you and other responsible U.S. officials my personal thinking on the nature and scope of allied offensive operations over the coming weeks.

The limitations under which our operations must be conducted may well result in actual or psychological setbacks in the days ahead. Therefore, I want you to be continually aware of my determination as Commander-in-Chief to insure the success of our efforts and my unwavering confidence in your ability to do so.

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